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**MARIO FERNANDEZ-SALDANA ARRESTED, INDICTED
FOR MURDER OF JARED BRIDEGAN**

Through the diligent work of several law enforcement agencies, State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that Mario Fernandez-Saldana was arrested and indicted by a Duval County grand jury for First-Degree Murder, Conspiracy to Commit First-Degree Murder, Solicitation to Commit a Capital Felony, and Child Abuse. All the charges are related to the February 2022 murder of Jared Bridegan.

Fernandez-Saldana was arrested in Central Florida on March 16, 2023, by a law enforcement team comprising ATF, the Jacksonville Beach Police Department, and Orange County Sheriff's Office. Concurrent with his arrest, Fernandez-Saldana was indicted by a Duval County grand jury.

Immediately prior to Fernandez-Saldana's arrest and indictment, his co-conspirator, Henry Tenon, pleaded guilty to Second-Degree Murder with a Weapon in the crime and has agreed to testify truthfully against any accomplice.

Fernandez-Saldana is the husband of Bridegan's ex-wife, Shanna Gardner.

Shortly before 8 p.m. Feb. 16, 2022, Bridegan was found lying in the roadway of the 4000 block of Sanctuary Boulevard in Jacksonville Beach, dead from multiple gunshot wounds. Immediately before his murder, Bridegan had dropped off his 9-year-old twin children, whom he shared with Gardner, at the home she shared with Fernandez-Saldana. This was part of a routine "date night" Bridegan had with the twins and his 2-year-old daughter from his current marriage.

Consistent with the route he normally traveled home, Bridegan turned onto Sanctuary Boulevard to access J. Turner Butler. At a dark stretch of road, he encountered a tire in the middle of the road. When Bridegan stopped the car and began to exit the vehicle to remove the tire, he was shot several times in front of his 2-year-old who was still strapped to a car seat in the back seat.

“We are now 13 months since Jared’s murder. And we have not stopped working,” said Jacksonville Beach Police Department Chief Gene Paul Smith.

An extensive investigation revealed Fernandez-Saldana was integral to the solicitation, conspiracy, and murder of Bridegan.

“On behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice, we are glad to contribute ATF’s expertise in violent crime investigations and forensics to provide answers to this tragic case. This is a solid example of great collaborative police work,” said ATF Special Agent Bob Bryson.

Despite the developments, the investigation remains active and ongoing.

“We remain committed to the seek the truth — the entire truth — and holding accountable every individual involved in the murder of Jared Bridegan,” said State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

The case has been investigated by the Jacksonville Beach Police Department and ATF Jacksonville with assistance from the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, ATF Orlando, and the Orange County Sheriff’s Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant State Attorney Christina Stifler.